Fronting as an Inimitable Linguistic Phenomenon in the Holy Qur'an

التقديم باعتباره ظاهرة إعجاز لغوي في القرآن الكريم

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to give a comprehensive account of fronting, which appears to be a universal phenomenon, and themes which appeal to users of almost all languages. The study principally focuses on this phenomenon in the language of the Holy Qur'an, which uses Classical Arabic, where frontling is widely used in its chapters and verses. However, other examples from Standard Arabic are analyzed by way of illustration. The study also presents a brief account of fronting in English. It is observed that linguists of English have identified several useful structures, which successfully account for fronting such as: clefting, focusing extraposition, left-dislocation thematization and topicalization. Arabic in general, and the language of the Holy Qur'an in particular, is full of examples where fronting is used for different purposes. Therfore, the researcher finds it necessary to present a brief account of the Arabic sentence: its nature, its components and its general patterns and structures as an introduction to the process of fronting in the language of the Holy Qur'an and the aims and purposes behind it (i.e. syntactic, semantic, stylistic, aesthetic, and literary aspects). It seems that fronting in the Holy Qur'an has become an inimitable linguistic phenomenon worthy of attention and investigation. This study is viewed as a modest attempt at trying to reach this goal. Further research is encouraged to bring about more comprehensive and productive results in this area.

الخلاصة

يعنى هذا البحث في مجمله بتقديم دراسة تحليلية للأمثلة المتعددة للجمل والتراكيب اللغوية التي يظهر فيها التقديم باعتباره ظاهرة اعجازلغوي في القران الكريم والتي تتميز بالدقة والبلاغة بالإضافة إلى بعض التراكيب الأخرى من اللغة العربية الفصحى على سبيل المثال والمقارنة والتحقيق. ويتطرق البحث إلى

موضوع التقديم باعتباره ظاهرة لغوية لا يقتصر وجودها على اللغة العربية, ولغة القران منها على وجه التحديد, بل يكاد يشمل كل لغات العالم . ويدرك اللغويون هذه الحقيقة ويؤكدونها في مختلف طروحاتهم ودراساتهم. وقد اثر الباحث أن يشير إلى هذه الظاهرة في اللغة الإنجليزية لأنها المجال الذي يتخصص فيه مستفيدا من مثل هذا العرض كمقدمة للولوج في الدراسة قيد البحث. وفي هذا الصدد فقد وجد الباحث أن هناك العديد من العبارات والمصطلحات اللغوية السائدة والتي تكاد تكون شائعة للتعبيرعن هذه الظاهرة سواء أكان ذلك يتعلق باللغة العربية أو غيرها من اللغات. وقد تطرقت الدراسة إلى غالبية هذه المفردات وعرضت الأمثلة التوضيحية لها. واثر الباحث أيضا أن يتضمن بحثه تقديما موجزا للجملة العربية: أنواعها وبنائها وعناصرها وما إلى ذلك للضرورة البحثية. وكان التركيز في عموم الدراسة منصبا على الأمثلة القرآنية التي تظهر فيها ظاهرة التقديم بارزة وواضحة مقرونة بالأغراض والغايات التي كانت وراء ذلك كالاهتمام والتخصيص والوزن والقافية. ويجزم الباحث في هذا الصدد أن الإعجاز هو العنصر الأهم في ظاهرة التقديم القرآنية كغيرها من الظواهر الأخرى. ومهما يكن من أمر فقد تطرقت الدراسة إلى كل الجوانب النحوية والدلالية والأسلوبية التي تتميز بها التراكيب اللغوية التي يتم تقديمها في الآيات القرآنية لهذا الغرض أو ذاك وكما يفسرها أهل اللغة والمعنيون بدراسة ظواهرها وغيرهم ممن كتب في ترجمة معاني القران الكريم. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن ظاهرة التقديم هي ليست مجرد وسيلة يتم اللجوء إليها لإضفاء جمالية ومسحة من البلاغة والتذوق اللغوي على اللغة التي تظهر فيها فحسب وإنما هي ظاهرة نحوية أيضا تفرض نفسها وتلزم القيام بها في مواطن ومواقع متعددة من التراكيب اللغوية وبهذا أصبحت ظاهرة اعجازلغوي جديرة بالدراسة والبحث والتحليل وهذا هو الغرض الذي دفع بالباحث للقيام بهذه الدراسة التي يأمل منها أن تكون نافعة ومفيدة في تحقيق المزيد من البحوث والدراسات اللغوية الأخرى .

Arabic Phonetics

1. Consonants		Mannaer of Articulation								
Place of Articulation		Bilabial	Inter-dental	Dental	Emphatic dental	(Alveo-) Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyn-geal	Glottal
Stops	Voiceless			t ت	t ط		k ك	q ق		?-ء
	Voiced	b ب		d د	d ض	j ج				
Fricatives	Voiceless	f ف	t ت	s س	s ص	sh ش	kh خ		h ح	h ه
	Voiced		dh ذ	z ز	z ظ		gh غ		ع ؟	
Nasals		m م		n ن						
Laterals				l ل						
Rhotic (trill)				r ر						
Semi-vowels		w و			y ي					

2. Vowels		**Other Abbreviations**	
Arabic	English	S	sentence
a	e	nom	nominative
aa	a:	acc	accusative
i	i	sing	singular
ii	i:	pl	plural
u	u	fem	feminine
uu	u:	gen	genitive
		masc	masculine
		NP	noun phrase
		VP	verb phrase

INTRODUCTION

Linguists have given extensive attention to the phenomenon of fronting such that fronting has become a universal linguistic phenomenon since it is found in almost all natural languages. It is obligatory in some languages such as Japanese, optional in others like English. In Arabic it is context-sensitive, i.e. it oscillates between optional and obligatory. Allerton (1979:275) states that “A language, like English, which has a relatively rigid order, needs to make extensive use of transformations like passivization, clefting, etc., to achieve the required thematic order of elements.” It is known that a sentence is a linguistic object; and so, if one of its constituents is fronted, then the treatment should be still linguistic. In this respect, Mallinson and Bake (1981) state that the possibility of placing the focused word or phrase at the beginning of a clause may be universal; and the most usual function for fronting is topicalization.

However, many linguists intend to give the process of fronting more close attention since it concerns all the semantic, syntactic, morphological and phonological components of language in addition to its stylistic and/or pragmatic effects.

As regards the Holy Qur'an, Irving (1992:3) states that it is obvious that “interpretation can express the whole range of meaning contained in any verse. But it can bring to light an aspect of meaning which has escaped our

attention in the past". It is fascinating that fronting is widely found in so many Quranic verses to emphasize the meanings of such verses.

2. WHAT IS FRONTING?

Winter (1982:16) states that fronting is a process in which a constituent that normally appears in some position within a sentence instead occurs at the front of the sentence, while a gap occurs in the normal position, as in;

1. This subject I enjoy ---------

where 'This subject' is fronted leaving a gap to occur in its normal position after the verb 'enjoy'. Culicover (1976) finds that fronting is a transformation which moves constituents to sentence initial position. Emonds (1976) gives examples indicating constituents which can be initialized;

2. These steps I used to sweep with a broom.
3. Each part John examined carefully,
4. Our daughter we are proud of.
5. Poetry we try not to memorize.

Ross (1967) and Postal (1974) define fronting as an upward movement of constituents over an essential variable. Jackendoff (1972) holds that fronting is a rule of preposition which moves phrases over a variable, thinking that such utterances result from a transformation called 'topicalization' that moves noun phrases to the front of the sentence; i.e., it attaches them to the highest sentence. So does Parlmutter (1979) when they refer to fronting as a process of moving an NP to sentence initial position over an indefinite distance; providing examples as the ones given below:

6. That man nobody hates.
7. That man John said that nobody hates.
8. That man Mary believed John said nobody hates.
9. That man somebody said Mary believed John said nobody hates.

In this respect, Chomsky (1975) demonstrates that fronting is optional, and has the effect of representing in the significant first place of

a clause something other than the topic (subject). He (ibid: ٩٦) adds that achieving such an effect is done by shifting a whole element of structure and placing it in an unusual position in the clause; whereas Karris (1982) expresses fronting in terms of 'linearization' or rather 'alternative linearization'. Elgin (1979) thinks that fronting is one of the rules used to mark a particular constituent of a sentence as the focus of that sentence. Leech (1975: 176), however, adds a new sense when he holds that instead of the subject one may

mark another element the topic by moving it to the front of the sentence stating that such a shift gives the element a kind of psychological prominence, and has three different effects;

a- Emphatic topics: giving the fronting element, in formal conversation, double emphasis: fronting, and nuclear stress; consider the following;

10. Fatin her name is.

11. Excellent food they serve here.

b. Contrastive topic: fronting helps to point dramatically to contrast between two things mentioned in neighbouring sentences or clauses which often have parallel structures:

12. Iraqi my nationality is; so Iraqi you might call me.

c. 'Given' topic: found in more formal, especially in written English, as in:

13. Most of these problems a computer could solve easily.

Davison (1984) refers to fronting as a matter of linguistic performance that relates to the sentence-planning and the order in which its constituents are processed.

It seems that there are other terms in the English grammar indicating the same meaning of fronting. Thematization (or marked theme transformation), is a case in point. Here, it is possible to take as 'theme' of

a clause some element not usually assuming that function. It is through this possibility that theme becomes a variable factor of importance in the message. Relaredly, Quirk and Greenbaum (1972: 411-12) think it quite common, especially in informal speech, for one element to be fronted with nuclear stress and thus to be 'marked' (given special emphasis) both thematically and informationally. Consider the following sentences:

14. Really good cocktails they made at the hotel.
15. Good teachers they might become.

Huddleston (1971) states that ‘marked' theme is any element (or group) preceding the mood subject other than wh-items and conjunctions. Thus in:

16. Yesterday John was abroad;

'Yesterday' is the 'marked theme’, since it occupies the theme position; and the marked theme transformation or thematization is responsible for this procedure. Quirk and Greenbaum (1972: 412) mention that a second type of marked theme occurs in rhetorical and heightened language. They state that such a type of markedness helps to point a parallelism between two elements in the clause concerned and two related elements in some neighbouring clauses, contrast in meaning.

Bakir (1979) unfortunately misconceptualizes the concept of ‘thematization’ He confuses the concept with terms such as 'extraposition', ‘clefting’, ‘left-dislocation’, and ‘focusing’ as used by Ross, Huddleston, Chomsky, and Dik. According to these authors, fronting is utilized negatively: a less important element is shifted to the front so that end-focus can fall on another important one. Jackson (1982) states that the cleft construction is used particularly in written English because it marks unambiguously the focus of information that can usually be done in speech by means of contractive stress and intonation, as in;

17. It was Demy that Jim found last night.

Regarding dislocation, Gundel (1977) suggests that the structures underlying left-dislocation sentences are derived by simply reversing the order of topic and comment in these structures. Thus, the sentence:

18. It was a great place, Babylon.

is derived from:
19. Babylon, it was a great place.

which is, in its turn, derived from:
20. Babylon was a great place. (cf. Gundel 1977)

Thus, fronting in English, as the writer thinks, can be regarded as a stylistic device for isolating one constituent of a sentence as 'topic' and the other as 'comment’.

3. FRONTING AS A LINGUISTIC PHENOMENON

Syntactically speaking, fronting is considered a process of arrangement. Thus, there are sentences in which any element can be shifted and replaced at the most-left position to be topic. Parlmutter (1979) points out that there are two important facts about English sentences. Firstly, each sentence contains a 'gap' since there is a constituent missing somewhere in the sentence, as in 20b below where the element 'Many delegates' is missing; and as so it is considered ungrammatical.

21 a. Many delegates we received at the airport.
*b. We received at the airport yesterday.

Secondly, this gap should be semantically and/or pragmatically filled in the way that makes it easy for the user of language to realize and understand it. Accounting for such sentences in English, Parlmutter (1979) suggests three hypotheses: the Phrase Structure Hypothesis, the Deletion Hypothesis, and the Movement Hypothesis. In Wason (1977) and Culicover, Wason and Akmajian (1977), fronting is visualized as a grammatical process that gives the configuration of movement. That is a device which yields this configuration. Winter (1982) adopts the adjunction and a way in which such a phenomenon would be formulated in the landing notation mentioned above. So does Jackendoff (1972). To the contrary, Bakir (1979), basing his proposal on the fact that a

transformational relation between both the deep structures and the surface structures is obtained through the application of a 'movement' transformation, comes to suggests the following for fronting in Arabic:

S V X Z
1 2 3 4 ⟶ 3 1 2 4

or: S V X Z
1 2 3 4 ⟶ 4 1 2 3

The semantic properties of fronting have been extensively and hotly investigated. Davison (1984), for instance, holds that topics are linguistic constituents with semantic properties; Elgin (1979) states that the fronted element in the sentence is the one with the greatest semantic prominence, at least for the speaker. Thus, in 22:

22. I hate squid.

We would say that this sentence is about ‘I’, and ‘I’ is the element with the greatest semantic prominence for the speaker. If, however, it is the ‘squid’ which should be the topic’ as in:

23. Squid I hate;

Attention will undoubtedly be drawn to the word ‘squid’ to the effect that it may have highest semantic prominence. Bolinger (1980) thinks that inside the comment there can be an element which is semantically the peak where the main accent of the sentence falls. Many other linguists correlate 'fronting' with 'presupposition'. They depart from the idea that the fronted element is to be presupposed first. Gundel (1977) is among those who think that 'topic' refers to what is already presupposed, while 'comment' refers to the new information, predicated about the topic. Tranicek (1967:160) adopts similar opinion stating that "the notion of topic is that sentence element which the speaker has in mind as his object of thought and from which his sentence precedes." Leech (1975:176) states that in fronting, “it seems as if the speaker says the most important thing in his mind first, adding the rest of the sentence as an afterthought." In a similar vein, Davison (1984) pinpoints that unless the speaker plans his choice of lexical verb in advance, he may find that he himself has

blurted out an inappropriate NP as subject; however, Winter (1982) holds that in front-and-end position, there are significant changes of contextual meaning for the topic which effects the meaning, especially that of the adverbial clause with respect to its main clause since it is known that 'topic' constitutes the frame of the clause about which the

sentence is, and since it is known that a text is divided into units of information.

Zampolli (1977) observes that the order of elements of Semantic Representation's (SR) may be regarded as a scale of Communicative Dynamism (CD). According to this scale and in a given SR, any of the elements can be fronted. The element carrying the lowest degree of (CD) stands at the extreme left-hand side and the element carrying the highest degree stands in.

4. FRONTING IN ARABIC

4.1 A Classification of Arabic Sentence

The traditional classification of base-generated Arabic sentences is based upon two binary categories: ‘Nominal Sentences', and 'Verbal Sentences'. In this study, the writer proposes that ‘Adverbial Sentences’ typically belong to one or the other of the above types of sentences. One type undergoes fronting for one reason or another. Nevertheless, the sentence which begins with an NP is termed nominal and sentences that start with verbs are verbal. Consider the following:

24. ?al watan u ʕaziiz un. (nominal sentence)
    the nation-nom. dear-nom
    ‘Nation is dear.’
25. ?at tifl u naama (nominal sentence)
    the baby-nom slept
    'The baby slept.’
26. naama t tifl u (verbal sentence)
    slept the baby-nom.
    ‘The baby slept.’

27. ʕind a ka dayf un (adverbial sentence)
    at-indeclinable you guest-nom
    'You have a guest.'

4.1.1 Nominal Sentences

As mentioned above, nominal sentences begin with a NP; and since (24) and (25) begin with ?al watanu 'the nation' and ?al tifl u 'the baby' respectively. Both (24) and (25) are considered nominal. Examining these sentences carefully will prove that (25) contains a verb following its initial NP whereas (24) does not. Therefore, a sub-classification is expected. As so, we have: a 'nominal equative' sentence which does not contain a verb as in (24), and a 'nominal non-equative' sentence where there is a verb, as in (25). It seems worth mentioning that in 'nominal non-equative' sentences the verb ostensibly agrees with the initial NP in person, gender, and number, as in the following nominal non-equative sentences:

28. ?at tifl u naama
    The baby-nom slept
    'The baby slept.'
29. ?t tifl aani naam aa
    The baby dual-nom slept-dual
    'The two babies slept'
30. ?al ?atfaal u nam uu
    The babies-nom slept-pl
    'The babies slept.'
31. ?at tifl aat u nim na
    The baby female-pl-nom slept-female plural
    'The female babies slept.'

4.1.2 Verbal Sentences

A verbal sentence, in Arabic is the one begins with a verb which unlike to nominal sentences, exhibits no number agreement. Verbs are always singular, as in the following verbal sentences:

32. naama t tifl u
    slept the baby-nom
    'The baby slept.'

33. naama t tifl aani
slept the baby-dual-nom
'The two babies slept'

34. nama l ?atfaal u
slept the babies-plural-nom
'The babies slept.'

35. naama ti t tifl aat u
slept-female the baby female-pl-nom
'The female babies slept.'

4.2 Components of Arabic Sentences

Arab grammarians use certain terms to express the Arabic sentence components such as; '?al mubtada?' (topic) and '?al khabar' (comment), '?al fiʕl' (verb) and '?al faaʕil' (subject noun) followed by their complements, '?al muta-ʕ alliqaat' or '?al mawduuʕ' (theme) and ?al mahmuul (rheme). It seems that Arab grammarians use the terms '?al musnad' and '?al musnad ?ilayh' to include all such terms; i.e., of ?al mubtada?, ?al mawduuʕ, or ?al faaʕil can be represented by the term ?al musnad ?ilayh, while ?al. musnad, is claimed to refer to any of ?al khabar, ?al mahmuul, or ?al fiʕl terms. This can be illustrated in the diagrams given below:

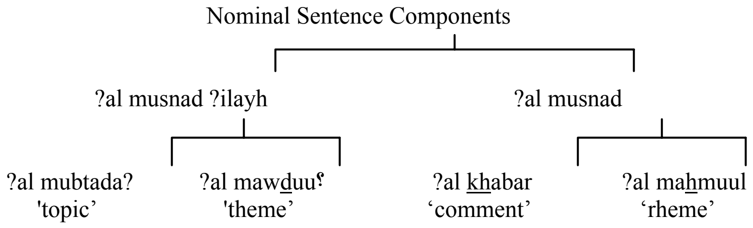

Diagram (1): Components of Nominal Sentences

Verbal Sentence Components

?al fiʕl / ?al musnad — 'verb'

?al faaʕil / ?al musnad ?ilayh — 'subject'

Diagram (2): Components of Verbal Sentences

Thus the components of the examples (36) and (37) can be expressed as follows:

36. ?al matar u naafiʕ un NP + NP
the rain-nom. useful-nom
'Rain is useful.

The word '?al matar u' is said to be mubtada? (topic),?al mawduuʕ (theme), or ?al musnad ?i1ayh at the same time; whereas the word 'naafiʕ un' is khabar (comment), mahmuul (rheme), or musnad.

37. ?inhazama l muʕtadii VP + NP
defeated the aggressor-nom
'The aggressor was defeated.'

In this sentence ?al fiʕl (verb) ?inhazama is its musnad, while ?al muʕtadii is its faaʕil (subject) and ?al musnad ?ilayh.

4.2.1 Theme and Rheme

Arab linguists hold that Arabic sentences include two principal parts; ?al mawduuʕ (theme), and ?al mahmuul (rheme). By this, Arab linguists mean that in any Arabic sentences there is somebody or something to whom/which something else is imputed. Thus in a sentence such as; ?an naaru muhriqatun 'Fire is burning'; '?an naaru' is supposed to be ?al mawduu' ʕ (theme), and 'muhriqatun' as ?al mahmuul (rheme). They try to justify their claim stating that ' ?an naaru' is something put before the mind to take a judgment towards it; and as so it is ca1 1ed ?al mawduuʕ (theme), whereas 'muhriqatun' 'burning' is the judgment taken by the mind as ?al mahmuul (theme). (Anees 1972)

It seems that what attracts the linguists' attention in the sentence are its two major elements and the judgment that correlates them. Arab linguists give instances such as waa ?asafaah, 'alas', subhaana l laah, 'praise to Allah', and zaydun, 'Zaid' (as a response to the question "who is coming?"). They claim that all such utterances, although they lack the theme-rheme structure, are well accepted, since they express full meanings pragmatically understood/used as complete sentential structures. Moreover, the listener regards utterances like; '?an naaru l muhriqatu' 'the burning fire' which contains both mawduuʕ and mahmuul (theme and rheme) as ostensibly incomplete sentences; and expects that something else should be uttered to complete their meanings.

4.2.2 Topic-Comment Structure

It was stated in (4.1.1) that nominal sentences consist of two immediate constituents, mubtada? (topic) and khabar (comment). To Arab grammarians, topic-comment sentences consist of an NP-topic followed by a comment which can be of various syntactic categories: NP, AP, PP, or S. That is, comments are either single words or (semi) sentences. (Bakir 1979) Below are some examples;

38. ?al ward u jamiil un NP + NP
    The flowers-nom beautiful-nom
    'Flowers are beautiful.'
39. zayd un qara?a l qasiidata NP + S
    Zaid-nom read the poem
    'Zaid read the poem.'
40. ?al ʕafw u ʕinda l maqdirat i NP + Semi-S
    forgiveness-nom at the capability-gen
    ' Forgiveness is at capability.'

Finally, as regards the word-order system in Arabic nominal sentences, topics usually precede their comments, since comments are thematically given to tell something about their topics. Otherwise, either a certain transformation movement takes place, or a sentence is occasionally ungrammatical. In this respect, Al-Ghalayeeni (1971) mentions six cases

in which topics precede comments. ?al khabar (comment), on the other hand, is of two types: a single word or a sentence. However, it is nominative in both cases; and its usual position is to follow the topic-NP. What is obligatory in this regard is the occurrence of agreement between comment and its topic in gender, person and number. The following sentences make this agreement clear.

41.?al mujtahid u mahmuud un
the diligent-nom commendable-nom.
'The diligent person is commendable.'

42. ?al mujtahid aani mahmuud aani
the diligent-dual-nom commendable-dual-nom
'The two diligent persons are commendable.'

43. ?al mujtahid uu na mahmuud uu na
the diligent-pl-nom commendable-pl-nom
'The diligent persons are commendable.'

44. ?al mujtahid at u mahmuud at un
the diligent-fem-nom commendable-fem-nom
'The diligent girl is commendable.'

45. ?al mujtahid at aa ni mahmuud at aa ni
the diligent-fem-dual-nom commendable-fem-dual-nom
'The two diligent girls are commendable.'

46. ?al mujtahid aat u mahmuud aat un
the diligent-fem-nom commendable-fem-nom
'The diligent girls are commendable.'

As previously noticed, a verbal sentence begins with a verb; and this verb should be followed by a (covert or overt) subject and, sometimes, by complements such as object, adverbial, adjectival, prepositional phrase, etc. It is also noticed that the verb exhibits no constant number agreement with its subject in person, and gender. Note the following sentences:

47. najaha t tilmiidh u (masc-sing)
succeeded the pupil-nom
'The pupil succeeded.'

48. najaha t tilmiidh aani (masc-dual)
succeeded the pupil-dual-nom
'The two pupils succeeded.'

49. najaha t talaamiidh u (masc-pl)
succeeded the pupil-pl-nom
'The pupils succeeded.'

50. najaha ti tilmiidh at u (fem-sing)
succeeded the pupil-fem-nom
'The pupil succeeded'.

51. najaha ti tilmiidh at aani (fem-dual)
succeeded the pupil-fem-dual-nom
'The two pupils succeeded.'

52. najaha ti tilmiidh aat u (fem-pl)
succeeded the pupil-fem-pl-nom
'The pupil succeeded.'

In this type of sentences, PSR for Arabic sentences can be formulated as follows:

Sv ⟶ VP + NP

It is remarkable that the verb should be followed by its nominal subject. If this order is rendered violated, a certain transformation takes place or, otherwise, the sentence is rendered ungrammatical.

5. FRONTING IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

The rapidly accumulating research on fronting in the Glorious Qur'an is striking. The majority of these studies concentrate on fronting as a stylistic and/or rhetorical phenomenon and the syntactic aspect has received only scant attention. It is telling that Abbass and Abbass (2001) refer to fronting in the Holy Qur'an as a subtle art evaluated only by such people who are concerned with excellent styles and rich knowledge of words. Likewise, Al-Samurraee (2000: 49-74) states that the Holy Qur'an achieves a maximum degree of the rhetoric of locating words, whether

obligatorily or optionally, in the most appropriate positions and consequently drawing magnificent and unique aesthetic pictures with optimal level of (internal) cohesion and harmony.

There is a consensus among Arab grammarians and rhetoricians that fronting in the Holy Qur'an has stylistic and/or rhetorical purposes. Al-Syuuti (1988), for example, outlines ten reasons behind fronting in the Glorious Qur'an such as : glorification, honouring, occurrence, exhortation, causality, ascensionm antecedence and/or descending.

Studying the properties of each of ?al musnad ?ilayh, and ?al musnad (subject-predicate), Arabic rhetoricians have come to believe that one characteristic of these components is their possibilities to be fronted and postponed. That is we, for certain purposes, move to initial position constituents that usually occupy postpositive positions. In this respect we may get ?al khabar (comment) preceding ?la mubtada? (topic), ?la faʕil (subject) or ?al mafʕuul (object) before its fiʕl, (verb), and mutaʕalliqaatu I ?isnaad (complements) (such as the prepositional genitive structures, and the adverbial constructions) in initial positions, as in the following examples:

53. li kull i ?ummat in ?ajal un (Al A'raf 'The Heights': 34)
to every-gen people-gen term-nom
'To every people is a term.'

as generated from:

54. ?ajal un li kul i ?ummat in
term-nom to every-gen people-gen
'A term is to every people.'

55. ?ayna maa kun tum taʕbud uu n (Al Shu'ara' 'The Poets': 92)
where what were you worship-pl –nom
'Where are the gods ye worshipped?'

56. wa l jaan a khalaq naa huu min qablu
and the jinn-acc created we it from before
'And the Jinn race We had created before.'
(Al-Hijr 'The Rocky Tract': 27)

as transformed from:

57. wa khalaq naa l jaan a min qablu
    and created we the jinn-acc from before
    'And We had created the Jinn race before .'
58. wa rusul an qad qasas naa hum ʕalay ka
    and apostles-acc have told we them upon you
    'Of some apostles We have already told thee the story.'
    (Al Nisaa 'The Women':1 64)

which is derived from;

59. wa qad qasas naa rusul an ʕalay ka
    and have told we apostles-acc upon you
    'We have already told thee the story of some apostles.'

Thus, one may find it necessary to change the word-order system if one tries to realize certain purposes and themes. This is very common in the language of the Holy Qur'an. In this respect, Al-Maraghee (1971:104) thinks that "it is sometimes preferable to change the word-order system in the way that the fronted constituent will achieve the purpose demanded in the Glorious Qur'an." It is evident that fronting in Arabic, and in the Holy Qur'an in particular, serves not merely rhetorical and stylistic purposes but also syntactic and semantic exigencies, since it undergoes definite syntactic and/or semantic effects on the way structures are made-up. Fronting swings between optional and obligatory. That is, fronting is obligatory in some structures and optional in some others, as shown in the Quranic examples given below:

60. li kul li naba? in mustaqar un (Al An'am 'Cattle: 67)
    to every-gen news-gen whereabouts-nom
    'For every news, there is whereabouts.' (obligatory fronting

61. wa ?mmaa bi niʕmat i rab i ka fa haddith (obligatory fronting)
    and but in bounty-gen lord-gen your rehears
    'But the bounty of the Lord, rehears and proclaims.'
    (Al Dhuhaa 'Morning Light':13)

Al-Jurjany (1367 H.) figures out that fronting in Arabic has two aspects: firstly, fronting that is made only for the sake of fronting in which both the fronted comment and the postposed topic retain their basic syntactic functions and their parsing features. Consider the following Quranic texts:

62. fariiq an hadaa (Al A'raf 'The Heights': 30)
    team-acc guided
    'Some He hath guided.' (optional)
63. li l laah i sh shafaaʕat u jamiʕ an
    to the God-gen the intercession-nom all
    'To Allah belongs exclusively the right intercession.' (optional)
    (Al Zumar 'Crowds': 44)
64. ʕinda hu mafaatih u l ghayb i (Al An'am 'Cattle: 59
    with him key-pl-nom the invisible-gen
    'With Him are the keys of the unseen.' (optional)

Secondly, fronting that is not made for the purpose of fronting. That is this type is obligatory and it is not a matter of rhetoric or style, as seen in (60) and (61) above. Once again for rhetoric and stylistic purposes, Al-Ghalayeeni (1971) accounts for the necessity of fronting such comments in obligatory cases for obliterating the suspicion of considering them adjectival phrases (rather than comments). Notice how kariim un 'generous' is a comment in (65), whereas it is an adjective complement in (66):

65. rizq un kariim un
    provision-nom generous-nom
    'A provision is generous.'

66. la hum maghfirat un wa rizq un kariim un
    for them forgiveness-nom and provision -nom generous-nom
    'For them there is forgiveness and a provision honourable.'
    (Al Nuur 'Light': 26)

Fronting may be channeled to limit the topic to its comment. Thus, in the verse;

67 la kum diin u kum we li ya diin ii
to you religion-nom your and to me religion my
'To you be your way to me mine.'
(Al Kafiruun 'Unbelievers': 6)

which is indeed a compound sentence, both comments la kum, in the first part, and li ya in the second, have their limited or specific topics: diin u kum, and diin ii, respectively. The deep structure of this sentence may be interpreted as:

68. diin u kum la kum wa diin ii lii
religion-nom. your to you and religion my to me
'Your way is to you and my religion is to me.'

Mustafa (1958) holds that moving any constituent of the sentence other than the topic to initial positions is to particularize what is postponed to become the most prominent constituent. This means that (69) is obviously a result of (70):

69. wa I ?ard a madad naa haa
and the earth-acc spread we it
And the earth We have spread out.'
(Al-Hijr 'The Rocky Tract': 19)

70. madad naa I ?ard a
spread we the earth-acc
'We have spread out the earth.'

5.1 Fronting in the Quranic Nominal Sentences

?Al khabar (comment), or any of its parts, precedes al mubtad? (topic) for certain purposes or reasons in nominal sentences. In these sentences, one may find it possible to talk about such a kind of fronting in the Quranic nominal sentences in accordance with the structure of comments. Consider these examples:

71. min talʕ i haa qinwaan un (Al An'am 'Cattle: 99)
in spathe-gen its cluster-pl-nom
'Out of its spathes come clusters of dates.'

72. ʕalaa l ?aʕraaf i rijaal un (Al A'raf 'The Heights': 46)
on the heights-gen men-pl-nom
'On the heights will be men.

To Bakir (1979), preposing such constituents undergoes movement to the left. Thus, it seems more straightforward to speak of this process as a simple process of movement. Moreover, comments can optionally be proposed if one of the following purposes is meant, as Al-Hashimi (I960), Al-1Maraghi (1971), and Anees (1972) have come to believe:

a. The relevance of comments to their topics, as in:

73. li1 laah i l mathal u l ?aʕlaa (Al Nahl 'The bees': 60)
to God-gen the example-nom the highest
'God sets the highest example.'

Here we find that the semi-sentence genitive comment, li1 laah i ,'to Allah', is fronted to confine the limitation of the highest example to God. This fronting is optional since the topic is definite. Thus, the deep structure of this example may roughly be the one given below:

74. ?al mathal u l ?aʕlaa li l laah i
the example-nom the highest to the God-gen.
'The highest example is to Allah.'

b. The arousing desire to know what is postposed/postponed. Consider the verse given below:

75. ?inna fii khalq i s samaawaat i wa l ?ard i wa khtilaaf i verily in creation-gen the heavens-gen and the earth-gen and diffence-gen
l layl i wa n nahaar i la ?aay aat un li ?ulii l albaab the night-gen and the day-gen there sign-fem-pl to owner the mind-pl
'Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; and the alteration of night and day, there are signs for men of understanding'
(A'li 'Imraan 'The Family of Imran: 190)

Here the desire is to know what is to be mentioned after such a long fronted comment; i.e., it is the postponed part which is the most attractive in this verse.

5.2 Fronting in the Quranic Verbal Sentences

regards verbal sentences, fronting ranges between option and obligation. That is fronting any element of the verbal sentence may be rhetorical/stylistic or syntactic. Consider the following:

76 man khalaqa s samaawaat i wa l ?ard a
who created the heaven-pl-acc and the earth-acc
'Who created the heaven and the earth?!'

77 fa ?ayna ta dhhab uu n (Al Takweer 'The Folding Up': 26)
then where you go -pl-nom
'Then whither go ye?!'

78 ?iyyaka na ʕbud u (Al Fatiha 'The Opining Chapter': 4)
you-acc we worship-nom
'Thee do we worship.'

In structures such as (76) and (77), fronting is obligatory, i.e., words such as interrogative-nouns rnan, 'who', ?ayna, 'where', maadhaa 'what', etc., conditional-nouns: mahmaa 'however', ?aynama, 'wherever', etc., and any constituents that follow ?ammaa 'as for' should be moved to the initial position; and any other alternative is ungrammatical. But in constructions like (78), fronting is optional, since such utterances and their original forms are accepted in Arabic. It seems imperative to account for all the cases in which constituents of verbal sentences can be fronted.

In my point of view, any nominal sentence whose comment is a VP is basically a verbal sentence. Al-Hashimi (I960), and Mustafaa (1958) state that 'wa l ?ard a' in (69) is the object in (70) fronted transformationally for certain purposes such as specification or limitation. However, when one element of a verbal sentence is fronted, various syntactic, semantic, phonological, and morphological changes occasionally take place. Sebuwayh, the celebrated Arabic grammarian, generalizes the aims or themes

of optional fronting in Arabic in terms of specialization, paying/drawing attention, or emphasis. Almost all Arab grammarians believe that fronting of verbal sentence elements does not change their syntactic functions; and what actually changes is their semantic interpretation. Al-Maraaghi (1971) and Ibnu l-Atheer (I960) suggest more purposes for fronting other than the ones already mentioned. These are: rhyme,

and apostrophe. This can be recognized through the Quranic texts given below:

79. khudh uu hu fa ghull uu huu
    take you him then seize you him
    thumma j jahiim a sull uu hu
    then the hell-fire-acc, burn you
    'Seize him and bind him, and then burn him in the blazing fire.'
    (Al Haaqqah ‘The Sure Reality’: 30-31)
80. fa ?amma 1 yatiim a fa laa taqhar
    as for the orphan-acc then not treat with harshness
    wa ?amma s saa?il a fa laa tanhar and as for the petitioner-acc then not repulse
    wa ?ammaa bi niʕmat I rab i ka fa haddith and as for by bounty-gen god-gen your then rehears
    ‘Therefore, treat not the orphan with harshness; nor repulse the petitioner. But the bounty of thy Lord, rehearse and proclaim!’
    (Al Dhuhaa ‘Morning Light’: 14, 15)

5.3 On the Level of Syntax

When presenting fronting in both nominal and verbal Quranic sentences, we find that certain syntactic changes happen within the generated sentences. The most prominent of such syntactic changes can be of the following types:

1. Fronting is sometimes obligatory. This denotes that certain constituents should be fronted to preserve the grammaticality of the whole structure as discussed earlier. There, it is found that if the topic is indefinite

and its comment is a 'prepositional phrase' or an 'adverbial phrase', fronting is obligatory. Also, it is determined that all the components of the generated sentence retain their original syntactic functions and parsing (nominative, accusative or genitive) cases. Thus, in (72), the fronted prepositional semi-sentence ʕalaa l ?aʕraaf i, 'on the heights' is still the genitive comment of the postposed topic, rijaal un, 'men':

Other question-words like; 'kayfa', (how), '?ayna', (where) and 'maadhaa', (what), for examples, should be fronted because they are among other nouns which always occupy initial positions, as seen in (75) and (76). Another form includes those cases in which topic encompasses pronouns that belong to their comments; i.e., when there is a presumptive pronoun that refers to the topic. In such cases, fronting of the comment is obligatory.

In addition to that, comments are obligatorily fronted if they are contained within their topics, as Ibn-Aqeel (1964) demonstrates, when comments are content only with topics which are preceded by the term ?ammaa, 'as for' found in the example of fa ?ammaa l yatiima fa laa taqhar 'Therefore treat the orphan with no harshness,' where the object ?al yatiim a 'the orphan' is fronted obligatorily because of the occurrence of ?ammaa. 2. Fronting is optional. What is interesting here is that some fronted elements retain their original function and parsing features while others do not. In (81), the element 'Muhammad' may(not) retains its syntactic function and parsing case as an accusative object or as a nominative topic:

81. Muhammad-acc/nom helped I him
'I helped Muhammad.'

However, both are basically derived from one and the same verbal sentence which is:

82. saaʕad tu muhammad an
helped I Muhammad-acc
' I helped Muhammad.'

This leads us to think of the following syntactic changes that characterize both structures:

a. (81) is a nominal sentence, while (82) is relatively verbal;

b. The word-order in each sentence is different. Thus while (82) has the (VSO) word-order, it is the topic- comment order in (81).

c. The functions of some constituents in (81) are different from those in (82). In (81) 'Muhammad' is (topic) or (object) in accordance with whether it is nominative or accusative respectively; whereas it is merely an object in (82).

d. (81) is a complex sentence since its khabar (comment) is a sentence. whereas (82) is rather simple. This can be illustrated in the following diagrams respectively:

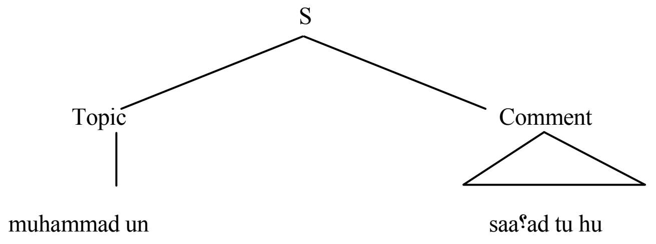

Diagram (3): The Nominal Complex Sentence

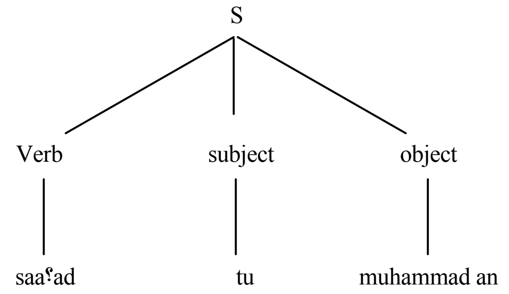

Diagram (4): The Verbal Simple Sentence

e. The comment in (81) has to include a 'resumptive' pronoun that is preferential to the NP to the left of the verb; i.e., the fronted constituent. It is worth noting that resumptive pronouns are either overt or covert. In covert cases, resumptive pronouns should be implicit, or muqaddar, (implied), in Arabic terminology. Bakir (1979) points out that there is a process of deletion of preferential pronouns. This process is restricted to subject pronouns within the comment structure of the verbal sentence. To illustrate this process is a quote in the following example from Bakir (1979):

83. zayd un qara?a l qasiidat a
Zaid-nom read the poem-acc
'Zaid-nom read the poem.'

S2 [NP1 Zayd un …S1 [qara?a [NP1 Zayd un] l qasiidat a]] ⟶
S2 [NP1 Zayd un …S1 [qara?a [huwa 'he'] l qasiidat a]] ⟶
S2 [NP1 Zayd un …S1 [qara?a [O] l qasiidat a]]

There are numberless examples of such fronting in the Holy Qur'an. These are but a few of them:

84. wa kulla ?insaan in ?alzam naa hu taa?ir a huu fii ʕunuq i hi
and every man-gen fastened we him fate-acc his in neck-gen his
'Every man's fate we have fastened on his neck.'
(Al Isra' 'Night Journey': 13)

85. wa mina l layl i fa tahajjad bi hi
and from the night-gen then pray in it-gen
'And pray in the small watches of the night.'
(Al Isra' 'Night Journey': 79)

86 wa l jaan a khalaq naa hu min qablu
and the Jinn-acc created we him from before
'And the Jinn race we created before.'
(Al Hijr 'The Rocky Tract: 27)

5.4 On the Level of Semantics

Sebuwayh, in Al-Makhzumi (1964), deduces that fronting is semantically multipurpose. He mentions the following semantic rationales:

1- Care and Attention:

It is well known that Arab speakers front that which is more attentive and deserving. Consider (87):

87. b ism i l laah i ?a qra? u
by name-gen, the God-gen. I read-nom.
'In the name of Allah, I read.';

The speaker fronts the elements bi smi l laah i to announce his/her care and attention to the name of Allah. But if he/she starts with ?aqra?u, that will mean 'reading' (rather than any other constituents) is the most attentive element.

2. Restriction and Specification

In the examples where the comments: li laahi 'to God', la kum 'to you' and ʕiyaa ka 'You' are fronted, topics are restricted and specified to those comments only. The word mulk u is limited to li l laahi; the postponed topic diin u kum is specified to its initialized comment la kum; and that naʕbudu is limited to ?iyaaka. All Arab grammarians admit this function and believe that the type of fronting is semantically necessary.

3. Emphasis:

Fronting is regarded as one form of emphasis. He bases his belief on the fact that fronting is a kind of specification and that specification is certainly a means of emphasis. Al-Makhzumi (1966) reiterates this opinion and points out that specification is the most expressive type of emphasizing the theme the speaker wants to establish in the mind of the receiver. In this regard, the writer provides some cases justifying the emphasizing function of fronting. When initializing the subject of a verbal sentence, for example, it is this fronted subject (rather than its comment) we want to emphasize. The same is true when the 'comment' of a nominal sentence, or any of the 'mutaʕaliqaat ?al-musnad' (complements of predicate) is fronted to the leftmost position, as in (88), where khaashiʕat an 'cast down', as (haal: adverbial of manner) is fronted:

88. khaashiʕat an ?absaar u hum
cast down-acc eyes-pl-nom their
'Their eyes will be cast down.'

(Al Qalam 'The Pen': 43)

5.5 On the Level of Morphology

In Arabic, many morphological changes take place when fronting is applied. These changes include the following:

1. Altering parsing cases:

Arabic is a highly inflected language. One of its essential morphological characteristics is that elements of any structure should have definite cases according to their parsing positions. ?al mubtada? (topic), ?al khabar, (comment), and ?al faaʕil, (subject), for example, are always nominative; ?al mafʕuul bi hi, (object) and most of adverbs are accusative, whereas all prepositional phrases are inflected with the genitive case (as seen in the different examples presented in this study). As far as fronting is concerned, two points of parsing cases should be considered: (a) If the fronted constituent keeps its original syntactic function, no change in its parsing case will take place, in other words, if it is nominal. If it is nominative, it will retain its nominative case and this is true in other (accusative and genitive) cases, as shown in the examples of lil baati li jawlat un 'for wrong there is a round.' and ?iyaa ka naʕbudu 'It is You we worship.' where both lil baati li and ?iyaa ka retain their parsing cases since they keep their original syntactic functions.

(b) If the fronted elements occupy new syntactic functions and/or positions, their parsing cases should be altered in accordance with their new functions, as seen in the examples of 'Muhammad un saaʕadtu' (where 'Muhammad un' is a nominative topic) as different from its deep structure 'saaʕadtu Muhammad an' (where 'Muhammad an' is an accusative object).

2. Adding new morphemes:

In a sentence like (89), the existence of resumptive pronouns is overt.

89. fii l maktabat i sahib u haa
    in the library-gen owner-nom its
    'The shopkeeper is in his bookshop.'

The coreferentiality of these pronouns with the topic constituents is also overt. Important questions come to mind. How are such pronouns used in such

structures? What kind of relationship is established between them and their topics? To answer such questions, let us first go back to the process of fronting, according to which elements other than initial ones can be transformationally moved to the beginning of sentences. There, we mentioned that gaps, occasionally result after moving such elements. In many Arabic structures, these gaps may be filled with co referential pronouns with the fronted constituents. The appearance of such resumptive pronouns seems to be obligatory otherwise the resulting utterance is ungrammatical and/or unacceptable. Thus, one may conclude that the relationship between the topic and the resumptive pronoun in the process of fronting is not merely anaphoric, as Bakir (1979) holds, but also syntactic. This is because the occurrence of the preferential pronoun is obligatory. Relatedly, Bakir (ibid) demonstrates that: "The pronoun, now, will be translated in the logical form by the same variable as the fronted NP". (1979:232). Consider how (90) is basically generated from (91):

90. wa I laah u yureed u ?an yatuub a ʕalay kum
    and the God-nom want-nom to repent-acc upon you-pl
    'Allah wants to accept your repentance.'
    (Al Nisaa 'The Women': 27)

*91. wa I laah u yureed u (I laah u) ?ay yatuub a ʕalay kum
    and the God-nom want-nom (the God-nom) to repent-acc upon you
    " Allah doth wish to accept your repentance.'

3. Changing allomorphs:

Arabic words are often inflected by affixes among which are pronouns. Such inflected pronouns are always 'damaa?iru muttasilatun' (bound pronouns/morphemes). For each connected pronoun, there is some

'damiirun munfasilun' (free pronouns /morphemes). Thus, both the (bound) and (free) pronouns can be considered allomorphs. For example, the bound pronouns '–ta', and '-ka' in 'dhahab ta', (You went.) and 'naʕbudu ka' (We worship You.) respectively are allomorphs of the morpheme ?anta 'you' as a self-content pronoun (free morpheme).

4. The apparent number inflection:

The verb in verbal sentences exhibits no number agreement. It is always singular. But when fronting the nominal subject, the verb should be inflected with a suitable apparent number which is, in fact a realization of a pronoun in a nominative case. In this respect, Bakir (1979: 232) thinks that verbal and nominal non-equative sentences are related to one another by what he refers to as a 'focus transformation'. In other words we prepose the nominal subject to the initial position, the postposed verb should agree in number, person and gender with its subject. Consider these examples:

92. ?ar rahmaan u ʕallama l qur?aan a (singular masculine)
the gracious-nom taught the Quran-acc
'It is Allah, the Most Gracious, who has taught the Quran.'
(Al Rahmaan 'The Most Gracious': 1-2)

93. ?an najm u wa sh shajar u yasjud aa ni (dual masculine)
the herbs-nom and the trees-nom bow-dual-nom
'The herbs and the trees bow in adoration.'
(Al Rahmaan 'The Most Gracious': 6)

94. ?a hum yaqsim uu na rahmat a rab i ka (plural masculine)
is it they portion-pl-nom mercy-acc God-gen your
'Is it they who portion out the mercy of thy Lord?'
(Al Zukhruf 'The Gold Adornments': 32)

in which the verb ʕallama, yasjud aa ni , and yaqsim uu na are inflected for person masculine pronouns that agree in number, person, and gender with their topics. This happens only when the subject noun is fronted, in contrast to the verbal senternce where there is no need for such agreement between the verb and its following subject, as seen in (95).

95. yasjud u l mu?min u/aani/uuna
    bow-nom the believer-nom (singular, dual, and plural)
    'The believer(s) bow(s) in adoration.'

5.6 On the Level of Phonology: Stress and Intonation

The researcher will focus on the two phonological processes of stress and intonation. Initial elements are usually given high/low intonation in accordance with the degree of their importance. This ultimately depends on the intention of the speaker, and hence, fronted elements may be strongly stressed. As for the special nature of the Holy Qur'an and the way it is recited, such phonological changes are very clear and easily recognized by both the reciters and the listener.

5.7 Fronting as a Stylistic Phenomenon

Natural languages apply various methods for sentences construction where deviation often occurs. Rhetoricians and writers often give themselves the right to generate new structures for certain aims, themes and purposes such as impression and expressiveness inter alia. Mustafa (1958), for instance, states that the success in choosing expressive elements that completely fit the intended meanings is the real essence of rhetoric as an art and as a science which requires inborn readiness and much practice for better development of innate abilities. Al-Maraghi (1971) believes that the uttermost aim behind the art of rhetoric is meaning clarification and utterance betterment. He states this goal can be realized through fronting.

As previously mentioned, when topics are indefinite, comments are obligatorily fronted. Therefore, it is syntactic and not stylistic. Strikingly, there are verses in which comments are fronted although their topics are definite. Let us consider these examples:

96. wa ?ilaa l laah i l masiir u
    and to the God-gen the fate-nom
    ' The final goal is to Allah.'

(A'l Imra'n 'The Family of Imran: 28)

97. ma?waa humu n naar u
abode their the hell-nom
'Their abode will be the fire.'
(A'l Imra'n 'The Family of Imran': 151

98. ?nna ?ilay naa ?yaab a hum
verily to us return-acc their
'Verily to us will be their returnl.'
(Al Ghaashyah 'The Overwelming Event': 25)

99. wa ?nna la naa lal ?aakhirata wa l ?uulaa
and verily to us the end and the beginning
'Verily unto us belong the end and beginning.'
(Al Infitaar 'The Cleaving Asunder': 8)

The postponed topics in these sentences: namely '?al masiir u', '?an naar u', '?yaab a hum', and 'lal ?aakhirata wa l ?uulaa' are obviously definite. So fronting of any element in these sentences becomes stylistic rather than syntactic. Anees (1972) thinks that it makes no difference whether or not such topics are postposed. Both structures are acceptable and fronting is not but "a style-difference that yields certain technical aspects influenced by the writer's mood, the music of speech, and the relations which link this structure with any other preceding and/or following one(s)." Arab grammarians and rhetoricians regard this kind of fronting as a stylistic technique attributed to the following objectives:

1. Psychological aims
2. Numerousness of a component
3. Rhymed prose and apostrophe, and
4. Poetic license

In relation to the psychological objectives, Mustafa (1958) holds that rhetoric is closely related to some other sciences like psychology. In this respect, he states that rhetoric demands inborn readiness and that rhetorical speech is used to move feelings. He appeals to literature as evidence since literature is the richest field with these procedures. Thus we can safely say that all forms of fronting other than obligatory cases

have psychological effects. Emphasis, for instance, is related with the inner feelings of the speaker that make him/her initialize certain elements for certain purposes. This is in harmony with the concept of language competence. Grammarians such as

Al-Hashimi (1960), Ibnu l- Atheer (1960) and others, talk about such psychological aims as: (a) fascination of what is postposed as a means of motivating the addressee and drawing his/her attention to what is postposed. Consider:

100. ?inna fii khalq i s samaawaat i wa l ?ard i
verily in creation-gen the heaves-gen and the earth-gen
wa khtilaaf i l layl i wa n nahaar i la ?aayaat u
and sequence-g refer en the night-gen and the day-gen miracles-nom
'Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alteration of the night and then day are miracles.'
(Al Baqarah 'The Cow': 164)

In 100, we feel that His Almighty Allah draws our attention to what follows the fronted elements; i.e., to ?aayaat 'miracles', since such an utterance bears some implication(s) that definitely psychologically affect us. (b) Showing optimism: in (101) below, it is evident that the khabar (comment) fii ʕaafiyat in 'with health' indicates the speaker's optimistic feelings, and in order to express this optimism he/she may tend to initialize such elements:

101. fii ʕaafiyat in ?anta
in health-gen you
'I wish you good health.'

(c) Haste of either pleasurable or offensive expressions; This is evident in (102) and (103) below where the speaker initializes the constituents: '?al ʕafw 'forgiveness', and ?al qasaas 'punishment'.

102. ?al ʕafw u ʕan ka sadara bi hi l ?amr u_
the forgiveness-nom for you issued with it the order-nom.
'The order of your forgiveness was issued'

103. ?al qasaas u hakama bi hi 1 qaadi
the punishment-nom decided with it the judge
'The judge decided the punishment.'

Multiform components are one more reason for stylistic fronting in Arabic. Most Arab writers prefer to postpone the multiform component and initialize the other, i.e., if ?al musnad is numerous, ?al musnad ?ilayh will be fronted and vice versa. Thus, in sentences such as the ones given below, it is the various forms of one certain component that influences the writer's style;

104. li 1 laah i 1 mashriq u wa 1 maghrib u
to the god-gen the east-nom and the west-nom
'To Allah belongs the East and West.'
(Al Baqarah 'The Cow': 115)

105. ?an nisf u la ka wa li ?awlaad i ka_
the half-nom to you and to children-gen your
'A half is to you and to your children.'

In (104) the multiform topic, ?a 1 mashriqu wa1 maghribu, is postponed while the comment li l laahi is fronted. But, in (106) it is in its normal sequence.

106.?al mashriq u wa 1 maghrib u li 1 laah i
the east-nom and the west-nom to the god-gen
'The East and West belong to Allah.'
(Al Baqarah 'The Cow': 115)

Ibnu l-Atheer (I960) states that in addition to the fact of specification, fronting is made for the aim of rhymed prose and apostrophe. In 107,

107. ?iyaa ka na staʕiin_ (Al Fatihah 'The Opening Chapter': 4)
you-acc we seek help
'We seek help from You.';

it is not only to limit seeking help to His Almighty God, but also to keep all the utterance in rhyme with what precedes and/or follows it (see surah Al-Fatihah). Supporting Ibnu l-Atheer, Al-Hashimi (I960) states that in:

108. wujuuh un yawma?idh in naadirat un
faces-nom day-acc that beam-nom
?ilaa rabb i haa naazirat un
to God-gen their look-nom
'Some faces, that day, will beam (in brightness and beauty)
looking forward to their Lord.'
(Al Qiya'mah 'The Resurrection': 22-23)

we find that fronting the prepositional phrase ?ilaa rabb i haa, 'to its creator', gives the structure a rhetorical form molding, harmony in rhyme and the theme of specification. Al-Hashimi (ibid) also demonstrates that fronting helps in clarifying meaning and in improving the utterance at the same time. This is, indeed, the ultimate goal of rhetorics. Al-Maraghi (1971), nevertheless, provides some texts to justify that fronting is sometimes made for no reason but rhyme and apostrophe, as seen in (79). He thinks that fronting of ?aj jahiim a 'the hell', and fii silsilat in 'with a chain' applies for the aim of rhyme and apostrophe rather than specification, since the situation is actually characterized with such a specification. The quoted verse of (109) is repeated so many times in the Surah (chapter) of Al Rahma'n 'The Most Gracious' as one more evidence for fronting where rhyme and apostrophe are intended:

109. fa bi ?ay i ?aalaa? i rabb i kumaa tukadhib aa n
then in which favours-gen god-gen your-dual-nom lie-dual-nom
'Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?'
(Al Rahma'n 'The Most Gracious': 13)

Poetic license is another stylistic device where deviation may be deployed in order to maintain the obligatory poetic devices of prosody and rhyme. Fronting, in Arabic poetry, is one of the alternatives used for this purpose. Poets can only exceed canonical linguistic rules and systematic bases to produce accurate forms of poetry because of the strictness in its metric system. The cases presented below show why such a phenomenon is regarded as poetic license. Al-Hashimi (I960) in the following example shows how the comment nisf un 'a half' is fronted so as to keep the poetic device of metre. The metre will be completely awkward if

the poet keeps the normal word-order where the topic usually occupies initial positions:

110. lisaaan u l fataa nisf un wa nisf un fu?aad u hu
tongue-nom the youngster half-nom and half-nom heart-nom his
'Tongue of a youngster is one half and the other is his heart.'

Remarkably, Ibnu-Aqeel (1964) gives another interesting case in which comments precede topics. He states that it is a rule of thumb that when comments are specified by ?innamaa, or ?illaa, 'but', they have to appear immediately after their topics. This rule, nevertheless, can be ignored in poetry under the effect of the poetic license. Al-Kumait's couplet is given below as an example.

111. fa yaa rabb u hal ?illaa bi ka n nasr u
oh God-nom is but by you the victory-nom
wa hal ?illaa ʕalay ka l muʕawal u
and is but on you the dependence-nom
'Oh God! I wonder if victory can be achieved but by You;
and if dependence is possible but upon You!'

In this couplet, both the comments bi ka 'by you', and ʕalay ka 'upon you' are moved to precede their basic topics '?an nasr u', 'victory' and ?al muʕawwal u 'dependence' respectively in spite of the appearance of ?illaa.

In the Holy Qur'an there are many verses in which what is so called poetic license is conspicuous. In the Surah of Al Muddathir (The One Wrapped Up), the verses (3, 4, and 5) in examples 112, 113, and 114 respectively are excellent cases in point.

112. wa rabb a ka fa kabbir
and God-acc your then magnify
'And thy Lord do thou magnify.'

113. wa thiyaab a ka fa tahhir
and clothes-acc your then purify
'And thy garments keep free from stain.'

114. wa r rujz a fa hjur
and the abomination-acc then shun
'And all do abomination shun.'

Fronting for the aesthetic purposes is commonly used in so many Quranic verses where heavenly words and expressions draw wonderful literary images. This may, however, go beyond the limits of aesthetics and stylistics of the language of the Holy Qur'an. Consequently fronting can be described as a matter of inimitability. The following verses have fronted elements as signs of such inimitability.

115. ?aw ka zulum aat in fee bahr in lujjiy
or as darkness-fem-pl-gen in sea-gen deep
yagh shaa hu mawj un
whelm it billow-nom
min fawq i hi mawj un
from over-gen billow-nom
min fawq i hi sahaab un
from over-gen clouds-nom
zulum aat un baʕd u haa fawqa baʕd
darkness-fem-pl-nom some-nom its over some
'It is like the depths of darkness in the vast ocean
overwhelmed with billow topped by billow topped by
(dark) clouds; depths of darkness one above another.'
(Al Nuur 'Light': 41)

116. wa zanna ?anna hu l firaaq
and thought that it the parting
wa ltaffati s saaq u bi s saaq
and rapped the leg-nom with the leg
?ilaa rabb i ka yawmaidhin l masaaq
to Lord-gen your that day the drive
'And he will conclude that it was (the time) of parting,
and one leg will be joined with another:
That Day the drive will be (all) to thy Lord!'
(Al Qiyaamah 'The Resurrection: 28-30)

6. CONCLUSIONS

Fronting seems to be a universal phenomenon found in almost all the world's languages. It has come to be obligatory in some languages,

optional in others. I have found compelling reasons to believe that fronting is both optional and obligatory in Arabic.

This study is an endeavour to unveil the secrets of fronting in Arabic. Arabic is astonishingly copious in its fronting arsenal. This is attributed to the fact that fronting is a device used for stylistic, rhetorical, and/or aesthetic purposes. However, it can be concluded in this study that fronting is not solely a stylistic device used to transpose certain elements to initial sentential positions, but also a linguistic phenomenon with syntactic, semantic, morphological and phonological effects.

As much as the language of the Holy Qur'an is concerned, fronting appears to be a unique phenomenon of specific linguistic and/or literary merits. A tremendous number of verses in almost all the chapters of Glorious Qur'an contain cases of fronting. It is used in such a heavenly wonderful way that it attracts the attention of whoever goes through the Quranic texts. The wealth of exemplification in this study makes it fairly clear that the phenomenal device of fronting is utilized for a great deal of linguistic and non-linguistic purposes. That is, fronting in the Holy Qur'an is coherently and cohesively used in syntactic, semantic, stylistic, rhetorical, and aesthetic ways. This cluster of merits is an evident mark that fronting in the language of Holy Qur'an is an inimitable fertile phenomenon worthy of further attention and investigation.

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